

## A. INTRODUCTION

### A.1 REASONS FOR PUBLISHING THE SUPPLEMENTAL DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

This document constitutes a limited recirculation of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Northeast San Jose Transmission Reinforcement Project proposed by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E Co.). The information contained in this document should be considered as supplemental to the Draft EIR issued in June 2000. This Supplemental Draft EIR was prepared to allow for public review of several changes to alternatives and discussion of other issues that resulted from comments on the Draft EIR. This Supplemental DEIR is recirculated in compliance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5, "Recirculation of an EIR Prior to Certification." In accordance with Section 15088.5(c), this document presents only new or revised information, and does not include the entire Draft EIR. Therefore, the information included in the Draft EIR (published in June 2000) is not repeated; however this Supplemental DEIR builds on it.

All comments received on the Draft EIR and the Supplemental Draft EIR will be printed in the Final EIR, and responses to all comments will be presented. The comments submitted on the Draft EIR are available on the project website at:

<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/divisions/energy/environmental/info/aspen/nesanjo/nesanjo.htm>

The Supplemental Draft EIR is organized as follows:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Introduction</li><li>B. Alternatives Description</li><li>C. Impact Analysis</li><li>D. Comparison of Alternatives</li></ul> |
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### A.2 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT AND ALTERNATIVES

The June 2000 Draft EIR presented detailed analyses of the project proposed by PG&E Co.: a 7.3-mile long 230 kV transmission line, a 24-acre substation, connections to the upgraded 115 kV distribution system, and a segment of 115 kV line in central San Jose. The proposed project is described briefly in Section A.2.1 below, and in more detail in Section B of the DEIR. As summarized in Section A.2.2, the DEIR also analyzed several alternatives to the proposed project, including other 230 kV and 115 kV transmission line routes and other substation sites. This Supplemental DEIR analyzes new alternatives and modifications to the proposed or alternative 230 kV transmission line routes considered in the DEIR, a new alternative substation site, and presents further analysis of the impacts of electric and magnetic field (EMF) mitigation and biological resources impacts.

### A.2.1 Proposed Project

The Northeast San Jose Transmission Reinforcement Project is needed to meet the projected electric demand in the Cities of Fremont, Milpitas, San Jose, and Santa Clara (the greater San Jose area). As illustrated in Figure A-1, the proposed project is located within the Cities of Fremont and San Jose, and includes a small, unincorporated area of Santa Clara County. Alternatives to the proposed project are located in the Cities of Milpitas, Fremont, Santa Clara, and San Jose. The four major components of the proposed project are:

- **Los Esteros Substation:** A new 230/115 kV substation located in unincorporated Santa Clara County to provide 230 kV power, which would be transformed to 115 kV power and distributed to existing distribution substations. In addition, the new substation will have the capability of expanding its distribution facilities in the future (four 230/21 kV transformers and 21 kV distribution feeders).
- **230kV Transmission Line:** A new 7.3-mile 230 kV double-circuit transmission line from the existing 230kV Newark Substation (in the City of Fremont) to the proposed Los Esteros Substation.
- **Newark Substation Modification:** Modification of the existing Newark Substation to accommodate the new 230 kV double-circuit transmission line.
- **115kV Connections and Distribution Line Upgrade:** The Los Esteros Substation would initially be connected to four existing 115 kV distribution lines that connect to 115 kV substations and facilities (Kifer, Trimble, Montague, and Agnews). Connection to the Montague Substation would require replacement of a segment of an existing 115 kV single-circuit wood pole line with a double-circuit steel pole line along Trimble Road and Montague Expressway (in the City of San Jose).

### A.2.2 Alternatives

#### A.2.2.1 Draft EIR Alternatives

As a part of the alternatives evaluation process, 22 potential alternative routes or methods of providing the required increase in electricity to the region were evaluated (see Draft EIR Section C.5). Of these, 12 alternatives were eliminated because they did not offer significant environmental advantages over the proposed project or because they were not feasible. The DEIR alternatives included five alternatives to the proposed 230 kV transmission line route (or parts thereof):

- \$ **I-880-A Alternative:** This overhead transmission line route would replace the northernmost portion of the proposed route and would avoid most impacts to the Pacific Commons Preserve by crossing it at its eastern edge (near the I-880 Freeway).
- \$ **I-880-B Alternative:** This route would replace the central part of the transmission line route, following the eastern edge of the Bayside Business Park closer to the I-880 Freeway rather than the western edge of the business park where the proposed route is located.

\$ **Underground Through Business Park Alternative:** In this alternative, the central portion of the 230kV transmission line would be installed underground through the business park following PG&E Co.'s existing 115 kV right-of-way (ROW).

**Figure A-1 Map of proposed project and alternatives considered in the DEIR**  
color 8.5 x 11

Figure A-1, 2<sup>nd</sup> page

- \$ **Westerly Route Alternative:** This complete transmission line route would avoid nearly all developed areas by following PG&E Co.'s existing transmission corridor through parts of the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge and other open spaces
- \$ **Westerly Route Upgrade Alternative:** Following the same route as the Westerly Route above, this would be a different electrical configuration in which the two existing 115kV double-circuit lines would be removed and two new 230kV double-circuit lines would be installed.

The DEIR also evaluated two alternatives to the proposed Los Esteros 230 kV substation site:

- \$ **Northern Receiving Station site:** This site, located in the City of Santa Clara, has been approved by the City for use as a 115kV substation, and could accommodate both facilities.
- \$ **Zanker Road Substation site:** Just south of State Route 237, on the east side of Zanker Road, this site could also accommodate the substation.

The DEIR evaluated two alternatives to the proposed 115kV Trimble-Montague Upgrade:

- \$ **Underground Trimble-Montague Alternative:** This alternative would involve an underground 115kV line along the same route as the proposed above ground upgrade.
- \$ **Barber Lane Alternative:** This alternative, while one mile longer than the proposed 115kV upgrade, would avoid the busy streets of Trimble Road and Montague Expressway.

In addition to the alternatives described above, the No Project Alternative was evaluated in each environmental issue area. The No Project Alternative addresses the impacts of the actions that would occur if the proposed project were not constructed. In this scenario, the demand for electrical service in San Jose, Fremont, Milpitas, and Santa Clara would still grow and either the electricity would be supplied by other means or electrical service quality and reliability would quickly decline.

#### **A.2.2.2 Supplemental DEIR Alternatives**

This Supplemental Draft EIR includes analysis of six new or revised alternative: five potential modifications to the 230kV transmission line route and one new substation site alternative. These alternatives are described in Section B of this document. The impacts of these alternatives are analyzed in Section C, and the alternatives are compared to the proposed project in Section D. Figure A-1 shows where the original Draft EIR alternatives were located. Figure ES-1 (in the Executive Summary) illustrates the location of alternatives included in this Supplemental Draft EIR. Section B presents detailed maps of each alternative.

### **A.3 PROJECT INFORMATION AND REPOSITORY SITES**

A telephone hotline for Northeast San Jose Transmission Reinforcement Project EIR information has been established at (408) 351-8858. This number receives voice messages and faxes. Project information is also available on the Internet. The project website includes the Notice of Preparation, Scoping Report, the April 2000 Newsletter, and the complete text of the Draft EIR. The project website can be accessed from the following Internet address:

**<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/divisions/energy/environmental/info/aspen/nesanjo/nesanjo.htm>**

Four repository sites in the proposed project area were established, and documents are also available at the CPUC. All project documents, including the Draft EIR have been made available upon their release to the public at the locations listed below.

Fremont Public Library  
2400 Stevenson Boulevard  
Fremont, CA 94538  
(510) 745-1400

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library  
180 West San Carlos Street  
San Jose, CA 95113  
(408) 277-4815

Alviso Branch Library  
5050 North First Street  
Alviso, CA 95002  
(408) 263-3626

Milpitas Community Library  
40 North Milpitas Boulevard  
Milpitas, CA 95035-4495  
(408) 262-1172

CPUC Central Files  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
(415) 703-2045

#### **A.4 CPUC DECISION / CEQA PROCESS**

A Final EIR will be prepared after an additional 45-day public comment period for this Supplemental Draft EIR. The Final EIR will include responses to comments on the June 2000 Draft EIR and responses to comments on this document. Comments on this document should be limited to the issues addressed herein, in accordance with the CEQA Guidelines.

The CPUC's General Proceeding, of which CEQA compliance is only one part, started when PG&E Co. submitted its application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) in September of 1999. In this proceeding, the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ; currently Sarah R. Thomas) and the Assigned Commissioner (Henry L. Duque) have held a series of hearings and listened to testimony of parties with an interest in the case. These hearings and testimony took place in August and early September of 2000. At their conclusion, and after issuance of the Final EIR, the ALJ and the Assigned Commissioner will prepare a Decision addressing two main issues: (1) whether this EIR should be certified as adequate under CEQA ("EIR certification") and (2) whether the project as proposed, or with alternatives as analyzed in the EIR, should be approved by the CPUC,

and if so, with what conditions or mitigation measures.

The proposed Decision on the project will be submitted to the entire five-member Commission, and the Commission will vote on the project in a public business meeting. This CPUC meeting and Decision are expected to take place in the winter of 2000/2001. The CPUC's Internet Home Page lists Commission meeting agendas: <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov>.